



# Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for February 02 – February 10, 2004

Issue 45

United States Agency for International Development

## STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNMENT

### Program Goals

- Support the Bonn process: the Constitutional, Human Rights, and Judicial Commissions; the elections scheduled for June 2004; and a free and independent media.
- Strengthen government budgeting, revenue generation (e.g., customs), monetary management, private-sector related legal and regulatory frameworks, and promote private enterprises.
- Build capacity to carry out other legitimate government functions and support reconstruction of health, judicial, education, economic, agricultural and transportation infrastructure.

### Recent Progress:

- **Signing of the Constitution:** On January 26, 2004, President Hamid Karzai signed the new constitution for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. A public education campaign is currently under development and will be executed over the course of the next couple of months. The campaign will publicize the constitution and highlight the necessity of public involvement in its implementation.
- **Tax Administration:** To strengthen tax administration and increase tax revenue, tax identification numbers are being issued to a variety of entities. As of January 22, the Ministry of Finance has issued 1,000 identification numbers. In provinces where identification numbers are issued, traders without them are not allowed to import. Diplomatic missions, international organizations, ISAF, and the US military will continue to be able to import without identification numbers.
- **International Bank Opening:** On January 19, Afghanistan's new international bank, the Standard Charter Bank, was opened in Kabul, joining the Aga Kahn microfinance bank. The bank provides general banking services, such as depositing of Afghanis and foreign currencies, as well as assisting with international transfers. In March, Afghanistan will open a new bank, Afghanistan International Bank, under a management contract with ING, a major Dutch international bank.
- **Kajaki Dam and Power in the South:** The majority of electric power for the cities of Kandahar and Lashkar Gah and their surrounding areas come from the Kajaki dam and hydroelectric plant constructed in 1975. Afghan engineers have done an amazing job of keeping the facility running for 28 years. Unfortunately, two of the plant's generators failed in September 2003, leaving both Kandahar and Lashkar Gah without electricity. On November 10, USAID provided Kandahar and Lashkar Gah with emergency electrical power by providing diesel generators.
- **Kajaki Dam Reconstruction:** USAID is financing the reconstruction of the dam's two generators and the addition of a third one. Of the two existing generators, one has been temporarily repaired, and some initial steps have been completed to install gates on the dam's spillway, raise the level of the dam, and add a second powerhouse capable of generating additional electricity.



*Aerial view of Kajaki Dam's powerhouse and reservoir*



*Kajaki Dam powerhouse.*



*Internal workings of damaged Kajaki Dam*

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## EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

### Program Goals

- 1,000 schools and at least 18 provincial women's centers rehabilitated or constructed.
- 15 million textbooks printed & distributed for 2004 school year
- 30,000 classroom teachers trained.
- 80,000 students enrolled in accelerated learning programs to reach their appropriate grade level.

### Recent Progress

Afghanistan Primary Education Program (APEP) is a three-year USAID program designed to provide new schools for communities that demonstrate a commitment to education. The program trains teachers, provides textbooks, implements accelerated learning programs, and provides advisers to the Ministry of Education. Primary education programs are underway in the Nangarhar, Faryab, Baghlan, and Kunduz provinces.

- **Radio-based Teacher Training Program:** USAID has launched "It's Great to Learn" radio series through local radio networks in two provinces. The series promotes education by using drama, song, poetry, and short lessons to help teachers improve their knowledge and skills. With the support of the provincial education authorities and cooperation from local teaching institutes, the radio series has become an effective way to reach large numbers of teachers quickly.
- **Tracking the "It's Great to Learn" Radio Series:** In order to determine whether teachers are actively listening to "It's Great to Learn" and applying what they learned in their classrooms, USAID has recruited and trained a group of local researchers who will travel to rural areas and collect data from schools. The tracking system provides both valuable program information and jobs for Afghan women.
- **Current School Reconstruction Sites:** To date USAID has rehabilitated/constructed over 200 schools, including daycare centers, primary and secondary schools, teacher training institutes and vocational centers. During the month of January, USAID contractors made progress in the construction of over 50 schools. Reconstruction efforts are moving along in provinces not affected by freezing weather, and USAID is working in close collaboration with local contractors in order to increase community involvement in the construction process.
- **New School Reconstruction Sites:** The Ministry of Education is working to have new schools built and dilapidated ones restored in every province of Afghanistan. Last week, USAID contractors, accompanied by national and provincial representatives of the Ministry of Education, traveled to 15 new school sites and conducted assessments of reconstruction viability. All 15 sites were approved by the Ministry of Education as viable locations for school reconstruction. Through the next several months, it is projected that 10 school reconstruction projects will be initiated each week.



*Mahjan from Jalalabad, a newly trained radio researcher.*



*USAID contractor inspection team visiting the site of the Kabul model schools, which are scheduled for completion in mid March.*



*Typical classroom furniture to be installed in the new model schools.*

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*Note: Progress on the Afghanistan Ring Road is reported in USAID's Weekly Afghan Road Update.*